

12134 Heneson Garth
Owings Mills, MD 21117-1600
May 30, 2003

Eric P. Newman
6450 Cecil Ave.
St. Louis, Mo 63105

Dear Eric:

I know it is hard to believe that you are 92!! Its wonderful that you reached such an age in such wonderful health. I remember my visit with you in 1960—seems like only yesterday. Again congratulations on this happy occasion.

I lost your email number when my computer burned out. Let me have it again when you have a chance. I hope you liked the pedigrees on your Getz halves that I sent some time ago.

With very best wishes,

George

Subj: **Getz halves**
Date: 4/19/2007 7:09:48 AM Central Daylight Time
From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]

Hi Eric:

Hope all is well!!

Now that I am almost finished with 3rd edition of Baker, I am returning to work on Jack Collins opus on listing all known Getz halves. The offerings from Ford and Norweb helped a lot.

I know that Jack must have had photos of your Getz holdings as Xerox's of them are in the draft copy. Did you ever find actual photos of your pieces? Did you have ANS photo any of them? I do need photos of your pieces if possible--can you help?

The revisions of the 3rd edition of Baker runs 168 typed pages plus about 40 pages (in two columns) of photos. Its amazing what has turned up.

Best regards,

George F.

Subj: **Thanks**
Date: 7/1/2007 9:04:05 P.M. Central Daylight Time
From: EricNumis
To: [REDACTED]

Dear George:

I was most appreciative of the portions of the inventory of the Newcomer collection you sent and have been studying them. I had never seen them before. I was most surprised at the write up of our Confederate Half Dollar which contained more provenance detail than I have had in my file for a half century. I had known that Elder had located it but never realized he was apparently responsible for locating two of them and wondered about the discovery dates and whether they were found in circulation. Merkin always concealed from me the ownership of the fourth one and I still do not know who had it or has it then or now.

I did find in my records photographic images of the Newcomer pioneer gold items. They are the most miserable pictures that I have ever seen or shall I say that I have tried to see. They are almost unrecognizable except that the coins are round.

I wonder why the Newcomer holdings were kept so secret although I presume some of the insiders knew all the details.

Thank you again for your kindness as you originally asked me for information and I ended up with you giving me more than I gave you. I will try to do better. Eric

See what's free at AOL.com.

Subj: **Re: Thanks**
Date: 7/2/2007 8:03:08 P.M. Central Daylight Time
From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]

Hi Eric:

Yes I would like photos of the four pieces you mention.

Thanks

George

----- Original message -----

From: [REDACTED]

Dear George:

This is a supplementary reply to your today's message.

You originally asked for images of some Newcomer pieces in our collection. I will be having some other coin images taken shortly (whatever that means) and when that occurs I could have a few taken of what you wish. You mentioned the Confederate half, the silver Continental dollar, the Nova bit and the Massachusetts reversed arrows. Do you still want these or any other particular ones of ours? I presume we have a few other scarce pieces.

Eric

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Subj: **Re: Thanks**
Date: 7/2/2007 1:11:56 P.M. Central Daylight Time
From: EricNumis
To: [REDACTED]
BCC: [REDACTED]

Dear George:

You asked about the Eliasberg 8 escudos counterstamped SB which I have never actually seen or studied. I therefore could have no opinion. From the image and data you furnished me it indicates that the piece was cast and I know of no reason why anyone would cast a doubloon of full gold value and intend it for circulation without a profit motive. To add to that confusion you will note that the counterstamping shows no flattening on the reverse from punching so perhaps the counterstamp also was cast with the original doubloon. There is no plug so the coin was not adjusted. It is also interesting historically that there are three different known American goldsmiths (adding John Chalmers to Ephraim Brasher) with their two initials on doubloons. Could there have been a contagious numismatic disease called ctstp syndrome for which there was no antibiotic? Eric

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Subj: **Re: Thanks**
Date: 7/2/2007 1:24:30 P.M. Central Daylight Time
From: EricNumis
To: [REDACTED]

Dear George:

This is a supplementary reply to your today's message.

You originally asked for images of some Newcomer pieces in our collection. I will be having some other coin images taken shortly (whatever that means) and when that occurs I could have a few taken of what you wish. You mentioned the Confederate half, the silver Continental dollar, the Nova bit and the Massachusetts reversed arrows. Do you still want these or any other particular ones of ours? I presume we have a few other scarce pieces.

Eric

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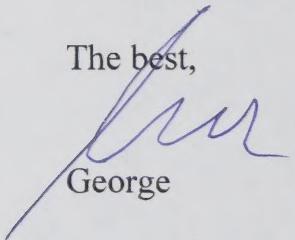
12134 Heneson Garth
Owings Mills, MD 21117-1600
June 12, 2007

Eric P. Newman
6450 Cecil Ave.
St. Louis, MO 63105

Dear Eric:

Enclosed is the Standish Barry lot from Eliasberg Gold Sale.

The best,


George

Unique Imitation Doubloon by Standish Barry, ca. 1790**"Mints are said to be boldly erected at Baltimore"**

(2x photo)



3012 (ca. 1787-1800) Countermarked and reeded cast imitation Lima 1735 8 escudos. Fr-7 (Peru). Fine by details, but nearly as made. SB for Standish Barry, Baltimore, Maryland. 26.42 grams, 28.70 mm. Reverse counterstamped SB in oval at center of cross and again near edge at 3:00 on cast imitation Peru host (Fr-7). Edge hand-reeded to prevent clipping. Mark attributed to Baltimore silversmith Standish Barry in *American Silver: Garvan and Other Collections in the Yale University Art Gallery*, 1970, which illustrates this precise mark on a ca. 1790-1800 Standish Barry teapot stand. Yale's attribution of dates is, of necessity, speculative but Barry's independent workshop opened in 1787. A previously unpublished American counterfeit from the earliest days of the Republic, most closely analogous to the 1742-dated struck counterfeits produced by Standish Barry's contemporary Ephraim Brasher of New York. Pale yellow gold, smooth and somewhat polished near the rims but rough and granular among the central details, consistent of a piece produced by a casting process. Some tiny pits near the rims are likewise consistent, as are the file marks on the edge. After filing, the edges of this piece were carefully decorated with 41 distinct impressions of a flower-like prepared punch that would act as reeding. Marked twice by Barry, once at center and once at an angle near 3:00 on the reverse — Barry's silver productions of this period are typically marked twice and with the marks at an unusual angle to each other, something of a Barry signature trait.

In 1795, the Director of the Mint for the United States, Henry W. DeSaussure, wrote that "In this country, mints are said to be boldly erected at Baltimore, and elsewhere, professedly to imitate the coins of foreign countries, and to furnish a debased coin for the West India markets; and so much of the gold bullion which would be brought to the national Mint is carried to these private establishments, which degrade our national character." (Quoted in *American Journal of Numismatics*, July 1892, p. 14.) Baltimore, then a boom-town enjoying newfound prosperity in the shipping trade that began during the American Revolution, was Standish Barry's home; he made a name for himself there as a war veteran

and was even elected sheriff late in his career. In 1790 he was known to direct a private mint, where he coined a silver threepence coin dated 1790 that featured his name. Specimens of his silver threepence are extremely rare today.

The analogy of this coin to the Brasher Lima-style doubloon is easy to draw: both are copies of a Lima 8 escudos cob intended to circulate, both were produced by a well-known metalsmith and marked at the center of the cross, and both are now extremely rare (there are two Brasher pieces of that design, and this coin appears to be unique at present). Importantly, this piece and the Brasher pieces weigh the same: this piece is 26.42 grams, while the two Brasher Lima coins have been measured at 26.39 and 26.40 grams — precisely the New York standard for a Spanish dou-

bloon of 17 pennyweights or 408 grains. The famous "New York" style Brasher dubbloons weigh 26.36 grams, 26.41 grams, 26.40 grams, 26.43 grams, 26.45 grams, and 26.63 grams. There are also differences, principally that the Brasher coins were struck and not cast, that the Brasher piece shows the maker's name completely spelled out, and that Brasher went on to produce the other more famous "New York" style doubloon issues.

As evinced by the present description, we feel that the present piece is of great interest to collectors of early American issues and those who collect circulating counterfeits made for the West Indian market. It is previously unpublished and was included among the Peruvian issues in the Eliasberg collection until identification by our numismatic staff. Were it simply a Lima 8 escudos marked or regulated by Barry, it would be a highly significant piece, but as it was signed twice by Barry in the manner of other well-known silver pieces produced by his smithy, we feel a high certainty that this piece was actually made by Barry, probably for the West Indian trade as suggested in the letter by Mint Director DeSaussure. It is a highlight of the Eliasberg collection and deserves a place alongside other more famous early American gold rarities. (\$15,000-25,000)

From the John H. Clapp Collection; Clapp estate to Louis E. Eliasberg, Sr., 1942.



Subj: **Getz CD disc**
Date: 2/12/2009 7:31:26 A.M. Central Standard Time
From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]

Hi Eric:

I want to thank you for sending the CD disc of yur copper Getz. I've goitten behind as Doris broke her hip and I've been living at the hospital.

Have photos virtually complete now so hopefully as soon as things settle down, I'll send off a final copy of Getz to our west coast friends.

Hope all is well.

George

Subj: **Re: Some ex Newcomer coins**
Date: 6/12/2007 2:25:54 P.M. Central Daylight Time
From: EricNumis
To: [REDACTED]

Dear George:

Commenting on your 6/11/07 message I would like to know whether there are any Newcomer lists or inventories for other than the colonial one which I have; the pattern one which Dannreuther furnished you and the foreign list. Were some lists of other categories sold by Kolbe or in other auctions or privately? Were some in the Mehl estate?

I also have the Newcomer Continental Dollar in silver and the Newcomer Massachusetts with transposed arrows, both of which you mention. Also lots more nice Newcomer colonials and Confederation coins.

I have a few lovely pioneer gold pieces which may have been his but could not afford to hold some of the Bechtlers because I had bought so much from the Green Estate.

As you may know a few of the choicest Newcomer pieces were creamed off by Garrett before the collection went to Green.

I see that Breen says Granberg and Newcomer previously had our Green Estate Confederate Half but I do not remember any evidence of that. Do you have any? My Confederate file is so big I would get lost checking it. .

You have an enormous project on your hands and I am sure you are enjoying the work.

Eric

See what's free at AOL.com.

Subj: Re: Some ex Newcomer coins
 Date: 6/12/2007 6:58:05 P.M. Central Daylight Time
 From: [REDACTED]
 To: [REDACTED]

Hi Eric:

Yes there is a complete inventory of the 1931 Mehl purchase. There was one in Ford sale that sold for \$19,500 to PCGS and Eliasberg has one. This includes the territorials and all the U.S. regular issues. Even has list of his Leshers (12 in all), his Hard Times (very meager) and his "freaks". The latter included a 1918/7D Uncirculated for \$15.00; a dollar gold piece borkage and two copper Liberty nickels only one of which is listed in Judd's Appendix B. His territorial holdings are marvelous with 40 different Bechtlers and a marvelous group of trial strikes throughout the series. I checked Garrett thoroughly and only found , I think, six pieces. One was Maris 8-F and the other notable one was the Maris 4-C, Baker 11. He purchased for \$1,500 Newcomer's 1742 Lima Brasher and sold his inferior one back to Mehl for \$500. Garrett also purchased three other New Jerseys that were not in Maris collection.

I wonder how well Newcomer knew John Work Garrett—they had mutual interests in railroads? Perhaps we'll never know. By the way I was a classmate of Waldo Newcomer II, his grandson, at MIT—he was class of 1952. When I tried to contact him in May, found that he died last year.

I'll send you a draft of the paper when I get a bit further along. Is email alright or do you want a hard copy?

Best as always,

George

----- Original message -----

From: [REDACTED]

Dear George:

Commenting on your 6/11/07 message I would like to know whether there are any Newcomer lists or inventories for other than the colonial one which I have; the pattern one which Dannreuther furnished you and the foreign list. Were some lists of other categories sold by Kolbe or in other auctions or privately? Were some in the Mehl estate?

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You have an enormous project on your hands and I am sure you are enjoying the work.

Eric

See what's free at AOL.com.

Subj: **Baker-24, etc.**
Date: 11/23/2008 8:33:40 AM Central Standard Time
From:
To: [REDACTED]

Hi Eric:

Good to hear from you!!

It makes sense that Brand bought the Wurtzbach holdings, but I have never seen it verified. Of the four Getz's that Wurtzbach had, we only have one photo so the other three are impossible to trace. I guess there is an inventory for Armin's holdings, but again without photos impossible to tell which is which. Stack's sold a high grade copper B-25 with pedigree ex Brand and Hall, repeated in 1976 when sold in Larid Park. . I know the original owner, and Jon Hansen who consigned it in 1973 made up ex Brand and Hall so as not to acknowledge where he bought it from. This is how pedigrees get convoluted.

I am trying to find out what happened to H O Granberg's four Getz's--have not been very successful.

I am attaching the section from the new Getz book on the Large Eagle Baker 23. Your comments would be appreciated.

Best,

George

11/18/2008

THE SAGA OF THE GETZ LARGE EAGLE HALF DOLLAR BAKER 23

The first mention of the existence of the Getz 1792 Large Eagle half-dollar was in an article in *Norton's Literary Letters* No. 2 of March, 1858. It was illustrated by a line drawing and showed the diagonal cancellation line on the reverse. The article stated that "two remarkable coins which have been kindly furnished us from the collection of Winslow J. Howard, Esq, of this city. The first is a silver coin, which can, with propriety, be entitled the 'Washington Half Dollar of 1792.' This curious and interesting relic of history had long been in the possession of a gentleman in this city, by the name of Bossuet. He took it in way of change for a half dollar, 27 years ago; and had kept it carefully stowed away, only occasionally bringing it out to show to the curious, refusing many offers for its purchase, until lately he was persuaded to part with it, at a large price, to the present owner; in whose hands it will, without doubt, remain, as one of the valuable gems of his collection." Howard cut his initial 'H' inside the U of UNITED. Reportedly Howard paid \$40.00 for the coin.

The article goes on to describe the coin, and mentions "a line which runs across the piece from the letter M to the tip of one of the wings, which shows that the die was broken at the time this coin was struck." In later years this line was often called a die break rather than the actual case where this is a cancellation mark from the die. The coin was said to weigh 206 grains [actually 194.5 grains], while the half dollar ordered by Congress, was to weigh 206 grains.

This remarkable coin was sold by Howard in 1858 to George N. Dana of Boston; thence to Rev. Joseph M. Finotti; W. Elliott Woodward's Rev. J. M. Finotti Auction Sale number 4 of November 11-14, 1862 as lot 1721 at \$125. The buyer was a Mr. LeRay. It is described by Woodward "XXXX". The coin has been part of many major collections. Ex Jeremiah Colburn (W. Elliott Woodward Sale 6, October 20-24, 1863, lot 1721??); Charles Ira Bushnell Collection (S.H. & H. Chapman, June 20, 1882, lot 1253 at \$365.); Lorin G. Parmelee Collection (New York Coin & Stamp Co., June 25, 1890,

lot 614 at \$175.) [NOTE-at the sale the unique gold 13 star Baker 20 as lot 618 sold for \$220.]; The Allison Jackman Collection (Henry Chapman, June 28-29, 1918, lot 239 at \$1,000 by Chapman for stock); Waldo Newcomer lot 2761; B. Max Mehl (1931 at \$1,500); John Work Garrett; Johns Hopkins University; The Garrett Collection Sales (Bowers & Ruddy Galleries, March 25, 1981, lot 1713 at \$16,500); John J. Ford, Jr.; The John J. Ford, Jr. Collection, part II (Stack's May 11, 2004, lot 27); to Ron Karp at \$34,500.

In an article in the *Historical Magazine* of March, 1860 pages 83-86, an early list of Washington medals comprising 49 different pieces was reported. It is signed by "A. S." of Brookline, Mass, Feb. 10, 1859. The Baker 23 Large Eagle half dollar is listed as number 38 from the collection of Rev. J. M. Finotti. The A.S. has been identified as Dr. August Shurtleff. *The American Numismatic Manual* by Montrovile Wilson Dickeson, first published in 1860 lists about 12 different Washington colonial coins. He lists as a Washington Half-Dollar the Large Eagle Baker 23 and illustrates it in silver on Plate XII, Figure 8. His description reads "This piece bears a very close resemblance to the Washington cent of 1792, and our theory relative to it is, that Mr. Getz, getting up the latter, did not arrive at a satisfactory experiment by a single effort; and that hence the former was struck off upon one of his rejected dies, upon which he had expressed the seal of his condemnation by putting a mark upon it, as if cut across by a mallet and chisel. It is very rare and valuable piece notwithstanding its mutilation, and descended in good company, from a period of time of which it is a memorial; and, though of doubtful paternity, it is held in much esteem by those who look to it for instruction, without reference to its origin or popularity."

The Washington medal list published by William Sumner Appleton in the *American Journal of Numismatics* vol. 7 and 8, 1872-73 assigned the Large Eagle half dollar his number 20. The Large Eagle Getz 1792 half dollar was listed by Sylvester Crosby in *Early Coins of America* in 1875 on page 356 as number 99. He did not give particulars "as the present owner is not known." William S. Baker in *Medallic Portraits of Washington* listed the half dollar as number 33 in 1885 noting that it was in the collection of Lorin G. Parmelee. Walter Breen in his *Encyclopedia* listed the Large Eagle half dollar as number 1346. Breen gives a "firm" pedigree on Baker 23 back to 1831 and suggests further pedigree to 1792. This was based on the fact that when Howard bought it in 1858, the cobbler Bossuet stated that he held it for 27 years. But why has only one example been reported? Probably because

the die work and planchet design was basically aesthetically unappealing and so no distribution was made beyond perhaps a trial piece.

As best the author can tell, there was not a whisper about a questionable contemporary nature of the Large Eagle half dollar until 1981 when it was offered for sale with the famed Garrett Collection. Members of the Bowers & Ruddy staff raised some question about the coin. It was submitted for analysis to M.I.T. in 1981. They determined that the coin was struck, not cast or an electrotype and was a silver composition. John Ford was anxious to obtain the coin for his own collection. He subtly planted the idea that it might not be contemporary with the date 1792. Although he wanted it badly, his discussions about the coin discouraged the ‘heavy’ bidders from running up the price. Ford paid \$16,500 for the coin—a bargain if real. However, if not contemporary, this is a lot of money for a questionable coin.

Based on the evidence at hand, at that time, the author felt that the Large Eagle coin was genuine and made near the listed date. He made this point in the article published in 1995 from the COAC Conference *Coinage of the American Confederation Period* on October 28, 1995 in the article entitled “Coinage Featuring George Washington” assigning the Large Eagle half dollar the number WA.1792.2.Ag. He stated “In the writer’s opinion, the large eagle Getz half dollar is fully genuine.”

However, based on a new examination of the properties of the Large Eagle half dollar, the author had to “eat crow” and change his mind about this coin. The Baker 23 Large Eagle half dollar had to be struck in the period of 1850 to 1855!! The reasons for my change of heart about this unique coin are summarized below.

Now, in 2008, the evidence seems overwhelming that the 1792 Large Eagle half dollar was struck about 1850 to 1855. There are five coins intermarried with the “Getz” 1792 obverse, and four of them have proved to be unique. The Large Eagle reverse, Baker 23, has been unique since first described in 1858. The 1796 Getz medal has been unique since first described in 1861. The Fonrobert 1792 fantasy half dollar, Baker 26, has proved to be unique since 1877. It has a wholly new obverse in the style of the Getz 1792 obverse. The newly described obverse of 1792 with a blank reverse was first reported in the Ford sale in 2004 although a similar piece was displayed in 1914. The only Getz combination that is available, as discussed herewith, is the small eagle 1792 coin, Baker 24 and 25, struck in silver and copper

The 1792 Getz dies were used in various ways after 1792. The 1792 copper Getz coin is known struck over a large cent of 1794 (Specimen number 42). This could have struck as late as 1800. The 1792 obverse with a blank back is struck from the later state of the obverse, the die clashed in the upper right field, also showing some ghostly outlines of the letters above the denticles of the clashing. The small eagle reverse of 1792 was used to strike the 1796 ‘medal’, Baker 33, from a late die state showing rust on the reverse. Hodder suggested that this medal could have been struck about 1800 in commemoration of Washington’s death. But why has only one example been reported? The 1792 Large Eagle half dollar obverse, Baker 23, is apparently in a worn state without the clash mark in the right field seen in later states of the die.

The key to proving the coin non-contemporary is the Fonrobert coin, Baker 26. When one examines the obverse, there is no way that the engraving is 18th century. Unanimously, numismatists agree that the die work is mid 19th engraving. However, the ultimate clue is that the reverse of the Fonrobert coin is virtually identical to the reverse of the Large Eagle half dollar. Although not identical, the similarity between the two reverse dies is startling. They must have been engraved by the same hand.

What this all means is that when Howard described the Large Eagle reverse in 1858, he had either great imagination or was completely misled by the cobbler Bossuet. Any provenance prior to 1858 must be pure fiction. One can readily agree that the coin was struck about 1850, but by whom or where is an open question. The Fonrobert fantasy would appear to have been made about the same period as the Large Eagle half. Since the Fonrobert coin is also unique, the how and why that Jules Fonrobert acquired his coin is another unsolved mystery.

When the Large Eagle half dollar was sold in the Ford sale, a price of \$34,500 as mentioned previously would have been a great bargain if the coin was fully contemporary. If it had a clear pedigree, as a genuine coin, the Baker 23 would have fetched over \$250,000. Still, it is impressive that a questionable coin should fetch over \$34,000. It should be mentioned that when Ford acquired the Fonrobert coin in 1981 for \$8,750—23 years later it sold for \$7,000 to the book for a net price of \$8,050. Of course this is still a fine price for a fantasy.

We refer the reader to examine the complex plate of the Getz coinage which shows the linkage between the various issues. A copy of the original pages describing the unique Large Eagle half dollar from *Norton's Literary Letter* No. 2 of March 1858 is shown in Figure XX.